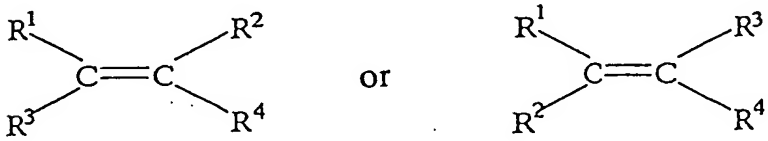
WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A water-based ink comprising an aqueous dispersion of polymer particles of a water-insoluble polymer having an alkyl group of at least 20 carbon atoms in its side chain, and a hydrophobic dye.

2. The water-based ink according to claim 1, wherein the hydrophobic dye is at least one dye selected from the group consisting of a copper phthalocyanine dye, a quinophthalone dye and a xanthene dye.

3. The water-based ink according to claim 1, wherein the water-insoluble polymer is a vinyl polymer prepared by copolymerizing a monomer composition comprising a monomer represented by Formula (I):



(I)

wherein each of R^1 and R^2 is independently hydrogen atom or methyl group; R^3 is hydrogen atom, carboxyl group, a $-COOR^5$ group wherein R^5 is an alkyl group having at least 20 carbon atoms, or a $-CONR^5R^6$ group wherein R^5 is as defined above and R^6 is hydrogen atom, an alkyl group or an aryl group; R^4 is a $-COOR^5$ group wherein R^5 is as defined above, or a $-CONR^5R^6$ group wherein R^5 and R^6 are as defined above,

a salt-forming group-containing monomer, and a monomer copolymerizable with the monomer represented by the Formula (I) and the salt-forming group-containing monomer.

4. The water-based ink according to claim 1, wherein the water-insoluble polymer has an anionic salt-forming group, and an acid value of 30 to 120 mg KOH/g.

5. The water-based ink according to claim 1, wherein the alkyl group in the side chain of the water-insoluble polymer is linear.

6. The water-based ink according to claim 1, wherein the water-based ink further comprises 5 to 35% by weight of a permeability controlling solvent.